



MEETING SUMMARY

TRANS-LAKE WASHINGTON PROJECT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**OVERLAKE HOSPITAL CONFERENCE CENTER OFFSITE ANNEX, BELLEVUE, WA
JUNE 27, 2001 — 1:00 – 4:00 P.M.**

INTRODUCTION, WELCOME, AND AGENDA REVIEW

Pat Serie, EnviroIssues, opened the meeting, stating that the purpose would be to review the public involvement over the last 2 ½ months, review the results of a public opinion survey conducted in May, and review Advisory and Technical Committee input from their meetings on June 18 and 19, 2001, respectively. There were no changes to the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dia Salogga, from the Montlake neighborhood in Seattle, spoke on behalf of the Hamlin-Shelby residents in that area. She stated the perception of what the possibilities are through the Montlake area, stating that the number of roadway alternatives have not yet been chosen in Montlake. The plans for that area, which will likely stack roadway levels, require aggressive TDM. The plans will only shift the problems. The impacts in the area will be enormous, including impacts to the sensitive areas and destruction of wetlands, MOHAI, the Arboretum. Freeways will encircle the area, especially if the tunnel to Pacific Street becomes a reality. The reconnection of neighborhoods has been dismissed as far as the Montlake area is concerned. The I-90 issues will likely push HCT through the Montlake area, causing further harm. The Montlake Shelby-Hamlin Committee is upset.

PUBLIC OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Amy Grotefendt, EnviroIssues, reviewed the public outreach activities conducted over the past several months. She reminded the committee of the public meetings held since the start of the new year. Outreach activities in March 2001, focused on the community design workshop results, including a series of public meetings. Outreach in April focused on the multi-modal alternatives that were created for evaluation. There has been outreach on both small and large scales reaching out to all levels of the public, from display boards at community centers and shopping malls, to community briefings and public meetings. Outreach was targeted to reach both people living in, working in, and using the corridor and those in directly impacted areas such as Montlake.

Amy summarized the input that has been received from the public, including anecdotal trends in the comments received. Dan Becker, Medina, pointed out that there was no mention of the clamoring in Medina and elsewhere for lids in the corridor.

PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

Bruce Brown, Pacific Rim Resources, reviewed the results of the public opinion survey conducted in late May and early June 2001. The purpose of the survey was to gauge public opinion on the eight multi-modal alternatives, and mitigation and enhancement options. He reviewed the methodology and key findings. The survey of the general population was conducted, not only within the corridor, as an origin-destination survey had been, done under the Trans-Lake Washington Study.

One of the most striking aspects of the results was that variables in the population demographics were not related to differences in opinion about the alternatives, mitigation and enhancements, and opinions about transportation options.

Key findings included:

- A large amount of support for HCT.
- Work/business trips were noted by fewer people as a reason for traveling in the corridor than recreational/social/personal trips.
- 70% of the respondents stated that the mitigation and enhancements should be a part of the project, even if 30% of the budget goes toward them.
- Given cost information, there was most support for two additional lanes in the corridor.

Discussion yielded the following points and questions:

- The work versus recreational use numbers do not note the frequency of trips, only the type. There might be much higher numbers of work-related trips on a daily basis than the numbers given.
- Regardless of how HCT works or looks, there was overwhelming support for it. Questions on the survey did not get into detail about operating characteristics that would make it more or less desirable, such as the number of transfers, for example.
- There was concern expressed that the numbers of people who support HCT would not necessarily translate into ridership.
- BRT was not included as part of the HCT options given to the participants.
- A preference for an HCT route on I-90 or SR 520 was not specifically asked for in the survey. There was no statistical difference in opinion about HCT based on geographical location.

- It was suggested that the responses of the people who used the corridor more frequently, e.g. for commuting, be looked at in more detail. The difference needs to be distinguished between what people will actually use and what people think. Only 11% of the respondents commute on SR 520, and 12% commute on I-90.
- People generally don't have a grasp of what billions of dollars of expenditure means to them in out-of-pocket expenses. A critical question may be whether people will be willing to spend money out of their own pockets.
- A managed lanes study showed 1/3 of the people would be willing to pay a toll for a faster trip 1-3 times per week.

ADVISORY AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE INPUT

Amy Grotefendt reviewed the input from the Advisory and Technical Committees on June 18, and June 19, 2001. She reviewed the general ideas conveyed in each of those meetings, including preferences for particular alternatives. She reminded the Executive Committee that these ideas were not recommendations, as the committees were not asked for recommendations regarding the multi-modal alternatives.

Ed Switaj, City of Seattle, stated that the Advisory Committee was not split in the discussion, as the majority of the representatives present were from the west side of the lake, and favored 4- and 6-lane options. Don Billen, Sound Transit, stated that the tone of the discussion in the Technical Committee was that the decision generally needed to be deferred, and focused on what additional analysis needed to be done.

MULTI-MODAL ANALYSIS CONCLUSIONS

Jeff Peacock, Parametrix, reviewed the multi-modal analysis conclusions presented at the June 13, 2001, all-committee workshop. Generally, given the findings for the 4- and 6-lane alternatives, the project team feels that both should be advanced for further study in the EIS. There are remaining questions about the 8-lane alternatives, however, and Jeff led a discussion of what some of those questions are.

There has generally been a feeling that if the facility is widened, the arterials will be relieved of congestion more quickly. The modeling has shown, however, that this is not the case; in fact, it has shown that there is added demand on the arterials as more people move to the facility.

Jeff Peacock also reviewed the BRT/HOV findings, stating that the person throughput will be similar to HCT over the next twenty years, but beyond that the system will face severe capacity restraints. For the HCT recommendations, either corridor meets the long-term transit needs, as there is little difference in ridership at a mid-lake screenline. One of the benefits of using the I-90 corridor is that it takes advantage of existing infrastructure investments. There are, however, many questions to be answered about the possibility of putting light rail on I-90, and consequently, questions about recommendations by the team for HCT/BRT options.

WORK PLAN/SCHEDULE

Jeff Peacock outlined the remaining questions that need to be answered before the project team would feel comfortable about recommending whether the 8-lane alternatives be studied in the EIS, as well as determine BRT/HCT recommendations. The team has suggested that the following be completed:

On I-90:

- Study permutations and modeling of light rail without HOV lanes in the outside roadway.
- Complete geometric evaluation for accommodating I-90 light rail and three GP and an HOV lane in both directions.
- Evaluate possibility of a parallel HCT crossing at I-90.
- The Sound Transit board decision for determining the possibility of two-way operations on I-90 is expected to occur in September 2001.
- The Sound Transit board decision for determining whether to include SR 520 HCT in the Trans-Lake EIS is estimated to occur in September 2001.

On I-405:

- Working to model the I-405 PPA, which calls for two additional GP lanes along the length of the corridor, and its effects on the SR 520 corridor.
- Understanding options for the I-405/SR 520 interchange, including an analysis of 124th Ave NE and Bellevue Way. Direct access will not be possible in all directions.

On I-5:

- Additional I-5 interchange analysis will be completed, which includes third party review.
- Additional information will be revealed through the I-5 Lane Continuity Study and its integration with the Trans-Lake Project.

2030 Modeling needs to be started.

Engineering and environmental work needs to be continued at:

- Montlake cut crossing, including a navigational study.
- Bear Creek and Marymoor Park.
- 4-, 6-, and 8-lane interchange definition will not be further investigated until the EIS alternatives are selected.

- Local traffic analysis/improvements will not be further investigated until the EIS alternatives are selected.

TDM definition will include:

- Pricing feasibility/strategy.
- Initiate corridor agreement discussions, and begin drafts for those agreements.

Other work will include:

- Enhancement (lid) recommendations for the EIS.
- Renderings and perspectives at key locations.
- Noise monitoring, including in the I-5 intersection/Ship Canal Bridge area.
- ESA indirect effects assessment.
- EIS methodology report.

Jeff Peacock stated that the team should feel comfortable making recommendations in the first week of October 2001. An all-committee workshop will be held in September, followed by Advisory, Technical, and Executive Committee meetings.

Jeff Peacock clarified that if HCT is reviewed in the EIS for the SR 520 corridor, there would still need to be a project-level EIS to create an HCT alignment in the corridor. The Trans-Lake EIS focus for HCT would be to preserve ROW. Exact alignments and technology in Seattle and on the east side would be examined in a later process.

Discussion yielded the following points and questions:

- Sound Transit and WSDOT are still exploring the possibility of HOV lanes on the outer I-90 roadways with FHWA. FHWA had raised some serious questions regarding the safety of those options.
- It was suggested that ultimately the committee should look toward having HCT on both corridors, and that the discussion of 'either/or' is a distraction. HCT on SR 520 will be necessary to preserve the possibility of eventually putting HCT on both corridors.
- Dave Earling, Chair of Sound Transit board, stated that the board will be occupied with light rail alignment and project issues over the next several months, and grappling with the FHWA issues on I-90. It may be possible to include information about the Trans-Lake HCT options in a board workshop slated for September/October 2001. Dave also stated that an Executive Committee recommendation voicing strong support for HCT on SR 520 would be influential, though the board may not be able to react to it very quickly.

- The Alaskan Way Viaduct, if it cannot be retrofitted, may force a re-examination of the Eastlake tunnel options, including the possibility of a connection over to SR 99.
- Current funding of the project in the amount of \$1.4 million will allow the team to work through October 2001. Les Rubstello stated that at least \$15 million is needed to get to the ROD, and \$8 million is needed to publish the draft EIS by next spring. Stopping and starting the project for lack of funding will cost a great deal of money, and may force the project to be re-bid. Aubrey Davis stated that the Transportation Commission may be able to redirect appropriated funds toward the project if need be.
- Dave Earling stated that a letter should be drafted to key legislators regarding funding, and that a list of representatives will be circulated among the committee members, including cross-regional representatives, so that they may be contacted directly.
- A preliminary preferred alternative is not normally selected by WSDOT going into the EIS.
- It was suggested that the 8-lane alternative and HCT be evaluated in the EIS until such time that it becomes apparent that they should be dropped. Jeff Peacock stated that it might not be possible to pursue options only partially through the EIS process. It will be quicker to analyze the alternatives in the EIS if they are fewer in number.
- It was suggested that the team move forward with the work plan as described.
- There was discussion about drafting a memorandum of agreement (MOA) or memorandum of understanding (MOU) similar to the I-90 MOA. It was suggested that it might move the project along faster in terms of mitigation and enhancements. It was also suggested that such an agreement carries little weight with the agencies making ultimate decisions.
- Jeff Peacock stated that if more alternatives than originally anticipated are analyzed in the EIS, a ROD could still be achieved in the first quarter of 2003, though it would require more resources. The team would feel more comfortable with achieving the ROD in that timeframe with 6-lane alternatives.
- The EIS is meant to inform the public of impacts; by itself it does not decide anything. Negotiations are not possible within the framework of the EIS.
- There was a suggestion made in the last all-committee workshop that consensus on the EIS alternatives would be a worthy goal to strive for. There were several more voices of support for waiting for consensus on the EIS alternatives, as well as expressing the need for additional information.
- The Redmond City Council is still reviewing the alternatives, and has not decided which to support for the EIS.

- It was suggested that the information be shared as early as possible, so that it can be reviewed within the jurisdictions.
- Les Rubstello, WSDOT, explained that FHWA requires a direct access report to be filed with them whenever adding capacity to an interstate facility. That report is usually completed on the preferred alternative at the conclusion of the EIS.
- It was suggested that phased HCT options be delineated, including the possibility of using BRT in an interim period.
- Though the Trans-Lake EIS would only preserve the ROW in the corridor for HCT on SR 520, full system costs were used in costing the HCT elements based on light rail technology.
- A suggestion was made for evaluating HOV, GP, and BRT, designing the BRT so that it could later support rail in the center of the bridge. Additional highway might be added by abutting new pontoons to the structure.
- It was suggested that inclusion of HCT also imply the maximum enhancements, even if the HCT is phased in.

NEXT STEPS

All the committee members present were supportive of the team recommendation to decide on the EIS alternatives during the first week in October 2001. Connie Marshall, City of Bellevue, and Chuck Clarke, City of Seattle, agreed to draft a letter recommending full Trans-Lake funding for the legislature on behalf of the jurisdictions. The team will be working on the information described today over the next couple of months. Appropriate communication with the committees will relay the completion of that information, and the committees will gather in September to discuss the results. The July 11, 2001, Executive Committee meeting has been canceled.

MEETING HANDOUTS

- Agenda
- What did the public tell us about the proposed alternatives?, presentation, June 27, 2001
- Public Opinion Survey, presentation, June 27, 2001
- Multi-modal Alternatives Analysis Conclusions, presentation (revised), June 27, 2001,

MEETING ATTENDEES

Executive Committee Members

Present	Name		Organization
X	Becker	Daniel	City of Medina
X	Berry	Jeanne	Town of Yarrow Point
	Cairns	Bryan	City of Mercer Island
X	Clarke	Chuck	City of Seattle
X	Conlin	Richard	City of Seattle
X	Crawford	Jack	Sound Transit Board
X	Davis	Aubrey	Washington Transportation Commission
X	Earling	Dave	Sound Transit Board
X	Edwards	Bob	Puget Sound Regional Council
	Fong	Gene	Federal Highway Administration
X	Ganz	Nona	City of Kirkland
	Gehrke	Linda	Federal Transit Administration
	Grigsby	Daryl	City of Seattle
	Horn	Jim	Washington State Senate
X	Ives	Rosemarie	City of Redmond
	Jacobsen	Ken	Washington State Senate
X	Marshall	Connie	City of Bellevue
X	Martin	George	City of Clyde Hill
X	McConkey	Fred	Town of Hunts Point
	McIver	Richard	City of Seattle
X	McKenna	Rob	King County Council
	Murray	Ed	WA State House of Representatives
X	Noble	Phil	City of Bellevue
	Okamoto	John	WSDOT - NW Region
	Pflug	Cheryl	WA State House of Representatives
X	Sullivan	Cynthia	King County Council
	Taniguchi	Harold	King County Department of Transportation

Executive Committee Alternates

Present	Name		Organization
X	Asher	David	City of Kirkland
	Bowman	Jennifer	Federal Transit Administration
	Drais	Dan	FTA
	Carpenter	Trish	Town of Hunts Point
	McKenzie	Jack	Town of Hunts Point
	Creighton	Mike	City of Bellevue
	Demitriades	Paul	City of Medina
	Dye	Dave	WSDOT - NW Region
	Earl	Joni	Sound Transit
	Hague	Jane	King County Council
	Hughes	Gary	Federal Highway Administration
	Jahncke	El	City of Mercer Island
	Conrad	Richard	City of Mercer Island
	Kargianis	George	Washington Transportation Commission
X	Paine	Thomas	City of Redmond

	Rourke	Philip	City of Clyde Hill
	Rutledge	Steve	City of Yarrow Point
X	Switaj	Ed	City of Seattle

Other attendees

Chris Johnson, King County Council
 Ann Martin, King County Transportation
 Terry Marpert, City of Redmond
 Len Newstrum, Town of Yarrow Point
 Elizabeth Newstrum, Town of Yarrow Point
 Roland White, Kirkland
 Kim Becklund, City of Bellevue
 Jean Amick, Laurelhurst
 Virginia Gunby, 1000 Friends of Washington
 Mitch Wasserman, City of Medina

Project Team

Les Rubstello, WSDOT
 Don Billen, Sound Transit
 Jeff Peacock, Parametrix
 Kim Farley, WSDOT
 Helena Kennedy Smith, WSDOT
 Glenn Davis, WSDOT
 Phil Fordyce, WSDOT
 Doug Hilderbrant, Parametrix
 Lindsay Yamane, Parametrix
 Loire Parker, CH2M Hill
 Alene Wilson, CH2M Hill
 Bruce Brown, Pacific Rim Resources
 Melissa Loomis, WSDOT
 Pat Serie, EnviroIssues
 Amy Grotefendt, EnviroIssues
 Paul Hezel, EnviroIssues

PJH